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THE POWERS OF GENIUS,

A POEM,

IN THREE PARTS.

BY JOHN BLAIR LINN, A. M.

CO-PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH IN THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA.

Natura fieret laudabile carmen, an arte
Quasitum est. Ego nec studium sine divite vena,
Nec rude quid possit video ingenium: alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res, et conjurat amicè.

HORACE.

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THE DESIGN.

GENIUS is the highest power of the soul, and opens before the poet a subject interesting and extensive. The different faculties which are subservient to genius, have frequently undergone investigation; while genius itself, has seldom been examined with care. Genius receives assistance from all the intellectual powers; but it is however, to be carefully distinguished from them. We often meet with works of real genius abounding with errors: the defect then, is not in the genius, but in the assisting powers. Taste has been called *passive genius*. It is necessary to direct the wild sallies of Imagination, and to regulate the course of the inventive mind. Taste is more generally bestowed on mankind than genius, and is depen-

dent on cultivation and rules. Genius, though always incorrect without study and investigation, still overcomes every difficulty and penetrates through the thickest and most hidden recesses. It stoops not to the smaller niceties of taste, but, heedless of them, pours along its irresistible course. An excellent taste may exist with little invention, but invention is the distinguishing mark of genius. Taste is improved by the comparison of the different grades of sublimity and beauty. Genius, disdaining any imitation, strikes out a path for itself, wild and hazardous, where foot has never trodden. "Genius (says Lord Kaimes) is allied to a warm and inflammable constitution; delicacy of taste to calmness and sedateness; hence it is common to find genius in one who is a prey to every passion—but seldom delicacy of taste."

The greatest incorrectness is frequently connected with genius. Numerous errors spring up in the most fruitful mind. The rich soil which gave birth to the oak, who waves his head in the tempest, also produces weeds and sickly flowers. The slightest impulse is at times sufficient to rouse the full strength of genius. A spark communicated excites the most terrible explosion. The

greatest river proceeds from the smallest fountain, rolls its waves over a large extent of country, and heaves its billows with the voice of the ocean.

It is supposed that the fall of an apple to the ground directed Newton to the investigation and discovery of the law of gravitation : that the sound of a smith's hammer gave to Pythagoras the first hint of his theory of music ; and that a wretched dramatic performance, by an Italian of the name of Adreino, awakened the soul of Milton to the grand conception of *Paradise Lost*. Genius implies such vast comprehension, such facility in the association of ideas, as enable a person to call in the conceptions that are necessary to execute the design in which he is engaged. We shall always discover that great stores of materials have been collected by his fancy, and subjected to his judgment. He darts with rapidity over the fields of his investigation ; and by this rapidity his ardour becomes more inflamed. " The velocity of his motion sets him on fire, like a chariot wheel which is kindled by the quickness of its revolution."*

* Milton.

Since then invention is the infallible criterion of genius, and invention in poetry is active imagination; since taste is necessary in order to form a polished genius, and taste is dependent on the judgment and sensibility; it is evident that genius is intimately allied with all these powers, and its correctness and improvement must proceed from their universal or partial conjunction.

If such then is the exalted nature of genius, the joy and satisfaction which are connected with it are entitled to the same eminence. All those pleasures which Addison has traced from the source of imagination belong to genius; for genius is the parent of imagination. The subjects upon which genius is exercised should be also respected and revered; for they are the fields of pure and rational satisfaction. Whatever affords a proper entertainment, whatever softens the calamities of human life, is useful. Literature, next to religion, is the fountain of our greatest consolation and delight. Though it is a solemn truth that the profoundest erudition disconnected with religion cannot enlighten the dark region beyond *the grave*, or afford consolation on the bed of *death*; yet, when in union with religion, litera-

ture renders men more eminently useful, opens wider their intellect to the reception of divine light, banishes religious superstition, and bows the knee with purer adoration, before the throne of God. Literature, on the rugged journey of life, scatters flowers; it overshadows the path of the weary, and refreshes the desert with its streams. He who is prone to sensual pursuits, may seek his joy in the acquirement of silver and gold, and bury his affections with the treasure in his coffers. The nobler soul, enlightened by genius and taste, looks far above these possessions; his riches are the bounty of knowledge, his joys are those which the wealth of the miser cannot purchase. He contemplates nature in her various forms, and finds companions where persons of different pursuits would experience the deepest solitude. "The studies of literature," says Cicero, "afford nourishment to our youth, delight our old age, adorn prosperity, supply a refuge in adversity, are a constant source of pleasure at home, are no impediment while abroad, attend us in the season of the night, and accompany us in our travels and retirements."

It is the design of the following Poem to draw no more than the general outlines of genius, to describe its progress, to ascertain the marks by which it may be known, and to give the prominent features of those writers who have excelled in its different departments. The notes have been added to explain passages which may be doubtful, and to support general assertions which may require some confirmation.

The author will not supplicate the candour, or indulgence of any individual, or any tribunal in favour of his Poem. He is willing that it should stand or fall by its solitary merit. Whatever may be its fate, it was written with an honest intention, during those moments of leisure, in which the author could withdraw from the severer studies of his profession. If literature and morals are not benefitted by this effort; it will not be disgraceful to have failed in the design to promote them.

THE POWERS OF GENIUS.

PART I.

ARGUMENT.

Genius described.—Invention, the criterion of Genius.—The alliance of Genius with Fancy.—Judgment, and sympathy.—Progress of Genius.—Taste and Genius distinguished.—Shakspeare's effect, and his neglect of rules.—Genius produced without cultivation.—Ossian.—Ariosto.—Burns.—Invocation.

GENIUS.

SAY what is Genius? words can ne'er define
That power which springs from origin divine;
We know it by its bold, impetuous force;
We know the torrent by its headlong course;
We know the sun by his effulgent ray,
Which gloom disperses from the face of day.
Invention* marks the genius of the soul,
And on the lightning rides from pole to pole.

* Invention is the first part of poetry and painting: and absolutely necessary to them both; yet no rule ever was or ever can be given how to compass it. A happy genius is the *gift of Nature*; it depends on the influence of the stars say the *astrologers*; on the organs of the body say the *naturalists*: it

It sweeps with comets its eccentric flight,
 And soars in air beyond the world's dim sight ; 10
 Disdains the paths that common footsteps tread,
 But breathes the spirit of the mountain head :
 It flies through scenes unvisited before,
 Exhausts this world, with Shakspeare sighs for more.
 Allied with Genius see bright Fancy move
 The queen alike of terror and of love ;
 She gives the wings on which Invention soars
 And untried regions of the world explores.
 Judgment* with these and sympathy refin'd
 Guide and improve the genius of the mind. 20

is the peculiar gift of Heaven say the divines. How to improve it many books can teach us ; how to obtain it, none ; that nothing can be done without it all agree :

In nihil invita dices faciesve Minerva.

Without invention a painter is but a copier, and a poet but a plagiary of others.

Dryden's Parallel between Poetry and Painting.

* It is by judgment that we discern the propriety of the plan and the execution of a work ; the conformity of stile and manner to its peculiar nature, the rectitude of sentiment, the probability of incident, the clearness of investigation and the uniformity of design.—“ Whatever (says Longinus) looks *great both in poetry and prose*, we must carefully examine

Though erring taste be found in early years,
 Yet blooming genius oft in youth appears;
 Youth sometimes burns with all the poet's rage,
 And speaks the glory of a riper age.

Behold where bursts the golden orb of day!

He rolls exulting in his fervid way;

He grows in strength till from meridian height,

He pours on earth his streams of burning light.

Thus Genius first begins her brightening course,
 Proceeds increasing in resistless force; 30

And all collected in one great design,

Moves like a giant just refresh'd with wine:

Then sweeps the storm which chills with loud alarm,

Then falls the vigour of Alcides' arm.

The poet often gains a madman's name,

When first he kindles with the muse's flame,

When wild and starting he appears in pain,

And shews a moon-struck phrenzy of the brain;

The world cries out, "What ails our neighbour's lad?

'Tis pity of the boy, for he is mad;" 40

whether it be not only appearance; we must divest it of all superficial pomp and garnish. If it cannot stand this trial, without doubt it is only swelled and puffed up, and it will be more for our honor to condemn than admire it.

He "often laughs aloud, and none know why,"
 And looks so strange and wildly from his eye;
 'Tis said, he wanders at the dead of night,
 And like a ghost, avoids the glare of light;
 'Tis said, he babbles to the Moon's full-beam,
 And sits, in silence, by the falling stream.
 Taste* is the willing umpire of the soul,
 And arm'd with sanctions acts without controul;

* Definitions often rather confuse than enlighten the mind. The arbitrary terms of metaphysical and logical writers, require a train of reasoning before we can observe the basis on which they are founded. It may however tend to place taste in a clearer view than we can by the measures of poetry, if we select from some approved authors, the most satisfactory definitions of taste. "Imagination united with some other mental powers, and operating as a percipient faculty, in conveying suitable impressions of what is elegant, sublime or beautiful, in art or nature, is called Taste."

This definition of Beattie has left unmentioned those mental powers united and operating with imagination; it has also confined taste to the discernment of what is elegant or beautiful, without noticing its rejection of what is faulty and improper — it is therefore in this respect incomplete — "Taste (according to the classical writer of Fitzosborne's letters) is nothing more than an universal sense of beauty rendered more exquisite by genius and more correct by cultivation." This defini-

It takes from Genius a reflected ray,
As Cynthia brightens from the source of day. 50
The seeds of taste in numerous breasts are sown,
But few can mighty Genius call their own.
Born in his wilds, the rude and humble swain
Whose wishes centre in his small domain,

tion, though not equal to the former, contains one beautiful remark; which is, that taste is rendered more exquisite by genius and more correct by cultivation. A much more complete definition of taste than either of these, is given by Rollin. "Taste (says he) with reference to the reading of authors and composition, is a clear and distinct discerning of all the beauty, truth and justness of the thoughts and expressions, which compose a discourse. It distinguishes what is conformable to eloquence and propriety in every character, and whilst, with a delicate and exquisite sagacity, it notes the graces, turns, manners, and expressions most likely to please, it perceives also all the defects which produce the contrary effect, and distinguishes precisely wherein those defects consist, and how far they are removed from the strict rules of art and the real beauties of nature. This happy faculty which it is more easy to conceive than define, is less the effect of genius than judgment, and a kind of natural reason wrought to perfection by study. It serves in composition to guide and direct the understanding. It makes use of the imagination but without submitting to it, and keeps it always in subjection. It consults nature universally, follows it step by step, and is a faithful image of it.

Who night and morning breasts the chilling air,
And tends his flock the object of his care ;
Views Nature's landscape with admiring eye,
And looks with wonder on the evening sky ;
He loves the grandeur of the gliding flood,
The pensive silence of the deep-dark wood ; 60
He loves to hear, while stretch'd on lowly bed,
The storm beat loudly on his little shed ;
Delighted views the golden sun of morn
And hears the hunter wind his early horn ;
The voice of music meets his willing ear,
The tale of sorrow ever claims his tear.
These warm impressions speak uncultur'd taste,
Which lives with rustics in the dreary waste ;
Which spreads o'er Nature an enrapturing smile,
And smooths for man the rugged brow of toil. 70
Who loves to wander o'er romantic plains,
Will likewise love the bard's descriptive strains ;
Who loves to listen to the feathered throng,
Enraptur'd hears the poet raise his song.
Judgment to all in every state is given,
But genius is the rarest boon of heaven. {
The world's small limits can but few contain,
Who more than worlds, hold in their boundless reign ;

Only an age can give a giant birth, 79
Then more than earthquakes shake the solid earth.

Taste is confin'd to rules, it moves in chains,
Genius those fetters and those rules disdains; *
No bands can hold her when she upward springs,
No storm can stay the thunder of her wings,
O'er fields of blood she takes her wandering flight,
And calls from death the shrieking ghosts of night.
When Homer wrote no critic's laws confin'd,
The outstretch'd genius of his soaring mind;
He look'd on Nature, Nature's voice obey'd,
And snatch'd that glory which can never fade; 90
The subtle stagyrite then weav'd his rules,
And form'd a race of imitating fools.

Hark! from the heath I hear some footstep dread,
Which beats the earth with hollow sounding tread;
Hark! from the tomb a voice of terror breaks,
The air breathes cold, the ground beneath me shakes,

* If we examine the greatest works of genius that have appeared in the world, we will find that they were all written without attention to the rules or directions of any critic. Milton though he had Aristotle's writings full in his remembrance, nobly despised them. To impose laws upon genius, is
..like *hopping* an Arabian courser.

A ghost appears, the moon withdraws her beams,
And all the thickets sound with frightful screams ;
The critic's voice is now as hush'd as death,
His eyes are fix'd, we scarcely hear his breath ; 100
Great Shakspeare* now commands the midnight hour,
And o'er the soul extends his dreadful power.
When in the tempest rais'd by Prosper's hand
He waves o'er Nature his commanding wand ;
When on the field of Bosworth, Richard lay,
And horrors shuddered at approaching day ;

* So much has been said and written concerning this wonderful man, that no one can add to his praises, and no one without arrogance can attempt to detract from them. In the list of Genius, Shakspeare is perhaps the brightest name. His superiority of invention gives him his superiority of genius. His limited education allowed him little opportunity of being acquainted with the writers of Greece and of Rome. His soul was kindled by no borrowed fire. He was visited by no beams but those of the sun of Nature. In the smaller accomplishments of the poet, he is oftentimes deficient ; but the richness of his description, his propriety of sentiment ; his accuracy and variation of characters, and above all that inventive power which calls an ideal world into existence, mark *the great original.*

The ghosts of York hung o'er his trembling bed
And breath'd their vengeance on their murderer's
head;

When Ariel sings and moves amid the air,
When Banquo rises to the vacant chair; 110
When Hamlet's ghost, the bell then beating one,*
Stalks pale and sullen by his warlike son.
Then gloom and terror throw their mantle round,
And every power lies still in awe profound.

A perfect taste dwells only in the mind,
With manners polish'd, sentiments refin'd;
But Genius rises from the darkest shade,
Where never ploughshare cut the barren glade.
Amidst his native wilds and misty plains,
Sublimest Ossian, pours his wizard strains. 120

* HORATIO.—Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

BERNARDO.—Last night of all,
When yon same star that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,
The bell then beating one.—

MARCELLUS.—Peace, break thee off, look where it comes
again. HAMLET.

The voice of old revisits his dark dream,
 On his sad soul the deeds of warriors beam ;
 Alone he sits upon the distant hill,
 Beneath him falls a melancholy rill ;
 His harp lies by him on the rustling grass,
 The deer before him thro' the thickets pass ;
 No hunter winds his slow and sullen horn,
 No whistling cow-herd meets the breath of morn ;
 O'er the still heath the meteors dart their light
 And round him sweep the mournful blasts of night.
 O voice of Cona, bard of other times 131
 May thy bold spirit visit these dull climes !
 May the brave chieftains of thy rugged plains,
 Remember Ossian and revere his strains !

See Ariosto* takes his boundless course
 Thro' fields of air upon his griffin horse ;
 From which he looks upon the world below,
 And bids the storms beat on his dauntless brow :

* This poet, whom the author of the Pursuits of Literature
 has classed among the greatest geniuses of the world, had the
 kindred soul of Shakspeare. His imagination appears from
 his works to be inexhaustible. His impetuosity bears him
above every difficulty. Amid fields of unlimited space he could

Ten thousand phantoms glimmer in his sight,
And on the winds attend him in his flight. 140
When knights and war he sings and war's alarms
He speaks in terror, like the god of arms ;
But when Angelica's soft charms he sings,
An angel's pinions sweep his trembling strings.

Untaught by science, not refin'd by art,
His sole instructors Nature and the heart ;

only stretch his wings. His immense bark could float on no other waves than those of the ocean. His mighty arm would wield no sword but that of Orlando, which fell upon the foe like the thunder of heaven. In genius, Ariosto is much superior to his rival Tasso, but he sinks behind him in taste and in correctness. Though his partial countrymen in preference honoured Tasso with the laurel, yet posterity will not generally acquiesce in their decision. If we compare their different merits we will at once be struck with the greater originality of Ariosto, and with the greater tenderness of Tasso—Tasso abounds with some of the most moving beauties of poetry, but he also abounds with glittering tinsel, and the general outlines of his poem are drawn from Homer's Iliad—Whereas Ariosto disdained any imitation. He delighted in the sublimity of irregularity. His flight is regulated by no rules. He soars *beyond the reach of Criticism.*

See lowly Burns* move slowly o'er the lea,
 And breathe the song of sweetest harmony.
 O see him seek the distant sounding shore
 His soul delighted with the dashing roar ; 150
 Or when young summer mantles o'er the earth
 And warm with life gives every flowret birth,
 See him muse lonely o'er the village green,
 And view with rapture each reviving scene,
 Snatch his quick pencil and with fervour trace
 " Transporting Nature in her wildest grace,†

* Burns to an exquisite sensibility united a power of description, not inferior to that of the author of the Seasons. His scanty information, however, repressed the exertions of his wild genius. His muse seldom looks beyond the glens of Scotland, its hills and romantic waters. Soured by misfortune and doomed to feel the pains of those, who, in humble life have listened to the trump of Fame, he sought indulgence to his sorrow among those scenes, which while they soothed his mind, awoke the pathos of his muse. His *Cotter's Saturday Night*—his *Address to a Mountain Daisy*—his *Lament on a Friend's Unfortunate Amour*—his *Lament on the Death of the Earl of Glencairn*—his *Vision*—and the *Petition of Bruar Water* will be lasting monuments of his talents.

† The lines which are marked, with little variation, are taken from Burns.

“ The Tay meand’ring in his infant pride,
“ The palace rising on his verdant side,
“ The lawns wood-fring’d in Nature’s simple taste,
“ The hillocks dropt in Nature’s careless haste, 160
“ The arches striding o’er the running stream,
“ The village glittering in the noontide beam,
“ The sweeping theatre of hanging woods,
“ Th’ incessant roar of headlong-tumbling floods.”

See him arouse his heaven-instructed lyre,
And look through Nature, with creative fire !
With feeling heart hear him attune his strain,
And sing the manners of the simple swain.

Genius ! awaken in this new-born land ;
Hold o’er these climes thy sceptre of command ; 170
Here wave thy banners ; sound thy trump of fame,
And give to glory the Columbian name !
Drive darkness far before thy golden ray,
And let us live beneath thy noon of day !



THE POWERS OF GENIUS.

PART II.

ARGUMENT.

Education necessary to give Genius its full power and usefulness—Beattie's Edwin described—Genius, though daring, excels also in subjects of the most soft and pleasing kind—Virgil's Eclogues.—Petrarch.—Gray.—Cowper.—The force of Fiction.—Rousseau.—Richardson.—Fielding.—Burney.—Radcliffe.—The varied direction of Genius.

GENIUS.

THO' in the dreary depths of Gothic gloom,
Genius will burst the fetters of her tomb ;
Yet education should direct her way,
And nerve, with firmer grasp, her powerful sway.
The comet's glare enlightens not the world,
Which flies thro' heaven, in wild confusion hurl'd ;
But 'tis the sun that holds his stedfast sphere,
And crowns the seasons of the rolling year.
The marble buried, in its native mines,
Conceals the beauty of its clouds and lines ; 10
The sculptor's polish can each beauty give,
And even make the rugged marble live !

Thus Genius, in the night of Darkness born,
May wind, unnotic'd, her resounding horn,
Unless some power shall, to her wondering-soul,
The page of knowledge and of art unrol.
Young Edwin* wandered in his native dell,
And woke the music of his simple shell ;
With pondering awe, he from the giddy steep,
“ Like shipwreck'd mariner,” o'erhung the deep,
And listen'd to the billow's solemn roar, 21
Which rolling fell upon the winding shore.
With morning dawn, he left his lowly shed,
And, led in wonder, sought the mountain head,
Where, hid in trees, and seated on the ground,
He listen'd to the far-off curfew's sound.
His thoughtful mind unlettered, would explore
And muse in sadness that he knew no more ;
At length an hermit, to his longing eyes,
Bade the sad visions of the world arise ; 30
To his attention all his lore express'd,
And rous'd the Genius kindled in his breast.

* See Beattie's Minstrel—a work of the justest sentiment, of the finest painting, and which gives to the world a picture in Edwin that can never be too much admired.

Tho' Genius mostly loves some daring theme,
Yet she can warble with the tinkling stream ;
Tho' her bold hand strikes the hoarse thundering
strings,
Yet not the nightingale more sweetly sings.
Hush ! every sound—let not a zephyr move ;
O let me listen to those notes of love !
For tender Virgil* breathes his softest strain,
And Amaryllis fills the shady plain : 40
His voice of music lulls the stilly scene,
And not a whisper flits across the green.
In transport toss'd, I tread some fairy shade,
And hear the accents of my peerless maid !

* The Eclogues of Virgil have been the models of the most finished pastorals, that have since been written. Pope's pastorals have little more to recommend them than their smoothness of versification. The writer who approaches nearest to the great master of this species of poetry, is Gessner. His idyls observe a style peculiar to themselves. He is happy in his selection of simple and affecting incidents ; of such as have great force upon the heart. Dr. Johnson in his criticism upon Virgil's Eclogues, after noticing the beauties and defects of each one, gives the preference to the first. In this decision he has been generally followed.

Her silent footsteps thro' the glade I trace,
And seem to clasp her in my fond embrace;
Around me flows the breath of every flower,
And wildest music breaks from every bower.

Thou murmuring breeze! O bear upon thy wing
That strain, which flows from Petrarch's* mourn-
ful string.

50

* This singular character was born at Arezzo, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, when Europe began to shake off the long slumbers of Gothic night, and to hail the morning of Literature. Early in life he received the patronage of the noble family of Colonna, under whose shelter he was enabled to prosecute his studies, and to obtain stores of information unequalled in that day. His romantic attachment for Laura, who was the wife of the young Hughes de Sades, is well known. He first saw this lady, at the time of matins, in the monastery of St. Claire. He was instantly struck with her face, her air, her person, her dark and tender eyes, "her ringlets interwoven with the hands of love," her gentle and modest carriage, and the melting sound of her voice. Unhappy in his passion, and unable to banish it from him, he mourned over it in his sonnets with the most inimitable tenderness, and sought for its alleviation in the solitary shades of Vaucluse; but all his efforts to forget the object of his affection were in vain. *Though he concealed himself in solitude from the observation*

O speak those charms which Petrarch's Laura wears!
O breathe that passion which he mourn'd in tears!

of men; yet the image of Laura followed him there. During his abode in this retreat, and while engaged in writing an epic poem, in honour of Scipio, which he called *Africa*, he received a letter from the Roman senate urging him, with many intreaties, to come to Rome, and receive the crown of laurel. On the same day in which this letter came to his hands, a courier arrived, bearing a similar invitation from the chancellor of the university at Paris: Petrarch decided in favour of Rome; and in the year 1341, amid the joy and shouts of a vast assembly, was crowned, with pomp and solemnity, at that capitol—Amid these intoxicating honours, "I blushed," says he "at the applauses of the people, and the unmerited commendations with which I was overwhelmed." Soon after, writing to a friend, he says, "These laurels which encircled my head were too green; had I been of riper age and understanding I would not have sought them. Old men love only what is useful; young men run after appearances, without regarding their end! This crown rendered me neither more wise nor more eloquent; it only served to raise envy, and to deprive me of the repose I enjoyed. From that time tongues and pens were sharpened against me; my friends became my enemies, and I suffered the just effects of my confidence and presumption."—Such is the unsatisfying nature of all *human honours*, and all human enjoyments! Seven years

Thou stream of Time ! bear in thy course, along,
The early lustre of Italian song!

after this coronation, Laura died of the plague which ravaged all Italy. From the account of biographers she was one of the most beautiful, accomplished and virtuous ladies of the age in which she lived. On a blank leaf of a manuscript copy of Petrarch's Virgil, the following lines were written by his own hand: " Laura, illustrious by her own virtues, and long celebrated in my verses, appeared to my eyes, for the first time, the sixth of April, 1327, at Avignon, in the church of St. Claire, at the first hour of the day: I was then in my youth. In the same city, on the same day, and at the same hour, in the year 1348, this luminary disappeared from our world! I was then at Verona, ignorant of my wretched situation. That chaste and beautiful body was buried the same day, after vespers, in the church of Cordeliers: her soul returned to its native mansion in heaven! To retrace the melancholy remembrance of this great loss, I have written it, with a pleasure mixed with bitterness, in a book to which I often refer. Since the strongest cord of my life is now broken, with the grace of God I shall easily renounce a world where my cares have been deceitful, and my hopes vain and perishing."

Petrarch died in the year 1374, at Arqua, and his body was interred in the chapel of the Virgin, which he, not long before his death, had built.

To lone Vaucluse let all the loves repair!
And tell their sorrows to her listening air;
There oft, when Cynthia threw her midnight beam
Along the banks, and o'er the silver stream,
Unhappy Petrarch wandered through the vale,
Wept with the dews, and murmur'd with the gale!
With all the learning of his favour'd isle, 61
With Genius, basking in the Muse's smile,
See pensive Gray* awake the Theban lyre,
And soar to heights where Pindar would expire!

* In what manner shall I speak of this accomplished author? Or how shall I describe the delight which he has given me? To call him the greatest poet of his day, will not express his merits—to place him at the head of all lyric and elegiac poets, would be no more than his due! He has indeed written but little; but that little is in a superlative manner. He revered the world too much to give it the hasty production of a day. He wrote for immortality, and immortality will be his reward. He was a poet who consulted his feelings when he wrote. The silence of seclusion, and the gloom of melancholy, dictated his, *Elegy*, in a Country Church Yard. He has himself acknowledged, in a letter to his friend, that an aged Welchman, playing on his harp, excited him to complete his ode, entitled, "The Bard."

When tolls the curfew the departing day,
 " And lowing herds wind slowly o'er the lea,"
 Mark how, in thoughtful mood, he takes his way,
 Thro' the lone church-yard, to his favourite tree!
 " Or see him by the green woodside along,
 While homeward hies the swain, his labour done,
 Oft as the woodlark pipes his farewell song, 71
 With wistful eyes pursue the setting sun."

Hear Cowper* raise his bold and moral song,
 Arm'd with sweet tenderness, in virtue strong;
 Truth, while he sings, lets fall her honest tears!
 And mad Oppression startles while he hears!

When Fiction lifts her mirror to the eye,
 And mimic lightnings from the surface fly—

* England has lately lost this excellent man and poet—to whom she is indebted for his elegant instructions conveyed in the *TASK*. Cowper was a writer, original in his thoughts, and undaunted in his delivery of truth. His representations are uncommonly striking: I need only instance his picture of Omai—the Woodman, and his Dog—Crazy Kate—and Mysagathus.—His principal faults are his want of connection throughout his poem, and his not attending sufficiently to the harmony of his numbers. He discovers, in numerous passages, that he *was capable of the utmost harmony*.

When, by the magic of her winning charms,
 She draws her captives to her downy arms, 80
 She gives Delusion all the grace of Truth,
 And thrills the fancy of enraptur'd youth!

Then Genius manifests her varied art,
 And reigns the mistress of th' impassioned heart.

Thou tyrant of the heart, sublime Rousseau!

Thou son of Genius, and thou sport of Woe!

Why did not virtue prompt thy wond'rous page,
 And purest love repress thy lawless rage?

Thine Eloisa then had reign'd alone,

And held the sceptre of the fairy throne. 90

See copious Richardson's* consummate art,
 Rouse every passion of the feeling heart!

See Fielding† travel thro' each scene of life;
 Nor pass the landlord or his scolding wife!

* Richardson was an author of uncommon merit; his knowledge of nature was extensive; his characters are drawn with a masterly hand; his delineations of the passions are accurate; his moral sentiments judicious. He wrote with a good intention, for he was a man of virtue and of piety.

† "Comic romance has been brought to perfection in England by Henry Fielding; who seems to have possessed more wit and humour, and more knowledge of mankind than any other

Present Sophia to our ardent view,
 As fair a picture as the pencil drew!
 See, 'mid his group, the country 'squire arise!
 And Square and Thwackum lift their knowing eyes!
 But chiefly mark, amid the motley throng,
 Poor parson Adams bend his course along! 100
 By Fancy crown'd, to every bosom known,
 Amid those scenes which truth and nature own,

person of modern times, Shakspeare excepted; and whose great natural abilities were refined by a classical taste, which he had acquired by studying the best authors of antiquity. The great lord Lyttleton, after mentioning several particulars of Pope, Swift, and other wits of that time, when I asked some questions relating to the author of *Tom Jones*, began his answer with these words, "*Henry Fielding, I assure you, had more wit, and more humour, than all the persons we have been speaking of put together.*"

BEATTIE'S DISSERTATION.

With these remarks of Dr. Beattie I agree. In many of the qualifications of a novelist Fielding is unrivalled. In speaking of the genius displayed in fictions, I could not pass over him; but the truth must not be withheld—that his works contain many scenes of indecency! his works, therefore, I would by no means recommend. There are few novels that I would recommend unconditionally; and I would recommend, that all of them should be read sparingly.

See Burney* move, with her creative wand,
 And bind our passions with her silken band!
 Draw Evelina from her native shade,
 In artless innocence and love array'd!
 Bids us to follow all her devious way,
 To own and feel the impulse of her sway.

While Nature howls, and Mirth's gay whispers die,
 Her eye on fire—her soul in extacy! 110

See bolder Radcliffe † take her boundless flight,
 Cloth'd in the robes of Terror and of Night!

* This writer is justly an universal favourite. In her manner of novel writing she is unrivalled. The three novels which she has wrtten, have each peculiar merits. *Camilla* manifests the greatest extent of observation—*Evelina* has most simplicity—but I think that *Cecilia* manifests most genius, and excites greatest interest.

† This lady, who has been called a mighty magician, soars amid the wild regions of romance. Her imagination is strong and daring; and, though it sometimes fails in its attempt, it is generally successful. In her department of genius, in the present day, none can approach her. She leaves far behind her *the Monks and Castle Spectres*. It is remarkable of this writer, that, from her first performance to the last, she has been advancing to greater excellence. Her Italian is the noblest

O'er wilds, o'er mountains, her high course extends
 Thro' darken'd woods, and thro' banditti's dens
 At length she lights within some ruin'd tower,
 While, from the turret, tolls the midnight hour!
 A thousand phantoms follow at her call,
 And groans ascend along the mouldering wall!
 Dim shadows flutter o'er the sleeping vale,
 And ghostly music comes upon the gale! 15
 A light appears—some hollow voice is near—
 Chill terror starts—and every pulse is fear!

But few can sway the boundless field of art;
 To few will Genius all her gifts impart.*

production of her pen, and one which I think she will never exceed.

* The instances are innumerable which confirm this assertion. I shall notice some, which are the most striking—Cicero the first name on the page of antiquity, failed in his attempt at poetry—Archimedes, whose name may stand (with a few exceptions) for the whole tribe devoted to mathematics, had little taste for any other branch of literature, than geometry. There are not a few, who would prefer the investigation of legs and wings of the most tiny insect, to the contemplation of the brightest planet that rolls through the worlds of space. Berkeley, to the exclusion of all other employments, was forever attempting to dig in a well without a bottom—w

One, she enables on the winds to soar,
And higher regions of the air explore.
To one she gives the sov'reign power to trace
The planet, wheeling thro' the worlds of space ; 130
Shè digs with chymists in the deepest caves,
And bounds with seamen o'er the distant waves ;
To one she gives the microscopic eye
To scan the legs and pinions of a fly ;
She leads bold Cæsar o'er the rolling flood,
Thro' trackless forests, and thro' scenes of blood :
Others she leads thro' Nature's widening range,
To mark the seasons and their ceaseless change ;

Gray who, at his time, was pronounced to be the first scholar in Europe, had no taste either for mathematics or metaphysics; in a letter to his friend are contained the following sentences, " Must I plunge into metaphysics? Alas! I cannot see in the dark; Nature has not furnished me with the optics of a cat. Must I pore upon mathematics? Alas! I cannot see in too much light; I am no eagle. It is very possible that two and two make four, but I would not give four farthings to demonstrate this ever so clearly; and if these be the profits of life, give me the amusements of it." Perhaps the two modern writers who possessed the most universal genius were *Leibnitz* and *Milton*.

To some she gives the love and power of song,
To move with strength and harmony along; 150
To hold the torch of satire in their hand,
And scatter light, thro' the deluded land;*
While some she gives the orator's controul,
To roll their thunder o'er the prostrate soul.†

* Literature is much indebted to the author of the *Pursuits of Literature*, and to Mr. Gifford, the author of the *Eaviad* and *Mæviad*, for their poems and criticisms. The *Pursuits of Literature* is a work which discovers genius, correctness of mind and great extent of information, and is calculated to restore true taste and true learning. While its author liberally approves the works of the true philosopher and the true poet, he points his overcoming satire against all those who would propagate false principles and false taste. Errors of judgment are uncommon with him. As a minister of the Gospel I cannot restrain my admiration of this author for the morality of his strains, for his defence of religion against the attacks of impiety and a new and dangerous philosophy.

† Eloquence as well as poetry has been the inexhaustible source of investigation. Which is the most proper mode of pulpit-eloquence? is a question which has been often asked, and differently answered. The *Abbe Maury*, in his lively and entertaining treatise, has denied their due merits to the English divines; and the English divines, on the other hand, do

To some she spreads a world's unbounded view,

not sufficiently infuse into their discourses the fire and passion of the French manner. Theology has been reduced to a perfect science; there are no new truths in religion to be explored; he, therefore, who, with an accurate investigation of these truths, connects a cultivated taste and exercised imagination, and subjects these powers under the guidance of reason, will be a more agreeable and persuasive combatant for divine truth than the preacher, who, though skilled in theology, has no perception of beauty and sublimity; but who delivers trite truths in triter forms. To the pulpit, the close and indissoluble reasoning of a Locke is not adapted; were preachers to reason like him, their hearers would return from church as edified as they came there; the mind must be aided by the silence and solitude of the closet, to comprehend the chain of such arguments.

The preacher must employ other weapons than syllogism; he must observe a medium between argument and declamation; the passions, as well as the understanding, must be addressed. Declamation, without a due proportion of argument, would have no effect upon the understanding; and argument, without declamation, would have no force upon the passions; therefore, to address the souls of men with power, and justly to accommodate the discourse to the prevailing taste, declamation and argument should be united. A forcible illustration, a forcible appeal to the heart, and a forcible question, will oftentimes convince, when many pages of the most masterly reason-

And gives the pencil with which Raphael* drew.

ing would fail. In proof of this, I appeal to the figurative expressions of our Saviour, and to some of the discourses of St. Paul—I appeal to some of the most eminent divines in the Christian church—I appeal, particularly, to Massillon, one of the most eloquent of men; read his discourses; you find Genius breathing in almost every sentence. You discover in his works, reason which, while it convinces the understanding, at the same time impresses the heart. What did he say when he drew the whole audience, by an instantaneous impulse, upon their feet? Did he prove, by mathematical deductions, that small were the number which should be saved? No—he told them the plain truth from the scriptures; and presented that truth in the most striking colours.

* At Greece, painting was first brought to perfection. The most famous schools in Greece were opened at Athens, Corinth and Rhodes. Rome afterwards cultivated this art; but, at the overthrow of that empire, it was swallowed up in the same grave with literature and science. In the year 1450, it again revived in Italy, and was advanced to an eminence, perhaps equal to that which it held in either Greece or Rome. Raphael Santio was born in the year 1483. He died in his thirty-eighth year. He surpassed all modern painters. His invention was unbounded. He possessed all the graces; and in the disposition of his pieces, he has left Michael Angelo, Titian and Corregio far behind him. Du Fresnoy, in his art of painting,

Nerv'd by her power, the statuary's arts,
 To the rough marble every grace imparts;
 Rous'd by her fire the voice of music flows, 159
 And lifts to joy, or melts with tenderest woes.*

and in his observations connected with that poem, considers him as the prince of modern painters, and characterizes him in these lines;

Hos apud invenit Raphael miraculo summo
 Ducta modo, Veneresque habuit quas nemo deinceps.

DU FRESNOY.

See Raphael there his forms celestial trace,
 Unrival'd sovereign of the realms of grace.

MASON.

* See in Burney's history of music, the wonderful effects of this art upon the mind. And an account of its greatest masters.

THE POWERS OF GENIUS.

PART III.

ARGUMENT.

The execution of Genius.—The passion of Love, an exciting cause of Genius.—The pleasures of Genius.—The rise of Genius in Egypt.—Greece.—Rome.—Gothic darkness.—The revival of Literature in Florence.—Its cultivation in England.—The descent of Genius.—Her address to America.

GENIUS.

~~*****~~

OBSERVE the man in whom these powers
combine,

Rous'd and excited by some great design;
Where'er he darts his intellectual ray,
Obstructions vanish, mountains melt away;
The prospect clears, and in the darkest night,
The torch of Genius sheds its searching light.
Her voice of thunder like Prospero's wand,
Bids fairy people bow at her command,
She bids them leave the silent depths of sleep,
And with their pinions overshadow the deep; 10
Her forces follow at her magic call,
She *guides their footsteps, gives her rules to all.*

What she designs her nervous arm performs ;
She builds her fabric in the war of storms :
The floods descend—it braves the mighty shock ;
It stands supported on the stedfast rock ;
Wide to the wind its massy doors unclose,
And hail the stranger to its safe repose :
Thus stands the oak upon the mountain's brow,
And throws his shelter on the shrubs below, 20
Thus with his wing the eagle guards his nest,
And rock'd in tempests soothes his young to rest.

Great Bacon's* soul first led the daring way ;
Then Newton's system call'd the world to day ;

* It is well known in the literary world, that the discoveries of Newton, excepting those which belong to pure mathematics, were derived from those outlines drawn by the bold hand of Bacon. Newton has exhibited a perfect and accurate system, but he had the example and directions of Bacon. "It would nevertheless (says Dr. Gerard) be a question of very difficult solution, which of the two possessed the greatest genius; Newton's inquiries concerning bodies the most subtle or the most remote, seem to demand an acuteness and compass of invention, which we might pronounce adequate to all the investigations of Bacon, though his discoveries in mathematics, perfectly original, were not extant to give a sanction to the judgment."

Hurl'd from his throne, the ruthless king of night,
Pierc'd his retreat and put his hosts to flight:
The world of matter and the boundless sky,
All Nature open'd to the sage's eye.

Love often wakes the poet's soul of fire,
And bids bold youth to noble deeds aspire: 30
Others it leads with folded arms to rove,
Where Silence slumbers in the peaceful grove.
Young Cymon* rous'd by Iphigenia's charm,
Felt the strong thunder nerve his clownish arm;
By daring deeds he won the lovely maid,
And bore her blushing to his native shade.

Where rolls the Forth his wild romantic flood,
Amid the moor an humble dwelling stood;
There liv'd an honest pair whose only joy,
Dwelt in their child, a simple shepherd boy; 40
With Fancy, kindled by the breath of Fame,
They gave their son Orlando's sounding name.
A modest blush, an honest heart he had,
And every village neighbour bless'd the lad.

* See Drydens, admirable tale of Cymon and Iphigenia.

Serenely o'er his head had eighteen years,
Flown, unembitter'd by remorseful tears.
He lov'd his pipe, and when the vale was still,
His strain came sweeten'd from the shady hill;
Nature he lov'd in all her various forms,
Her sleeping green, her mountain beat by storms,
Her winding stream, her ever rolling waves, 51
Her cooling shades, her deep and dismal caves.

Thus smil'd his days—"but why the tale prolong?"
He saw fair Anna—Anna 'woke his song;
Her lovely limbs a snowy vestment bound,
A silken cincture clasp'd her form around;
Hung careless on her back her dusky hair,
And wav'd in ringlets to the sportive air.
Her smile awaken'd every hope of love,
Her modest mildness would that hope reprove: 60
A pensive sorrow shaded o'er her face,
Admiring Nature gave her every grace.
Orlando lov'd—but all his vows were vain,
And all the sweetness of his mournful strain.
An happier shepherd from the banks of Tay,
Bow'd to her charms and bore the maid away.

Orlando mourns—his sun has set in night,
And fled each hope and every fond delight.

A sullen phrenzy dims his noble soul,
In gloomy silence his dark eye-balls roll ; 70
At dead of night he wanders o'er the vale,
And bares his bosom to the chilling gale ;
Among the rocks he leans, to hear the roar,
Of billows chafing on the sounding shore.
Each sound which strikes the village boor with fear,
Is all the strain Orlando loves to hear.
One night when howl'd the loud and angry north,
Alone he wander'd on the banks of Forth ;
Autumn had robb'd the foliage of the trees,
Their naked branches trembled to the breeze ; 80
The birds no longer rais'd their lulling strains,
But coming winter chill'd and hush'd the plains.

Heedless he rov'd while deeper clouds o'erspread,
And wilder tempests beat upon his head :
His phrenzy grew amid the ruthless storm ;
His fancy saw his long-lost Anna's form :
Onward he rush'd—he held the form in view,
He call'd on Anna—Anna from him flew,
Often he clasp'd in hope the fleeting maid,
But only clasp'd an unsubstantial shade. 90
Now up the hill, he turns his headlong course,
And laughs convulsive at the tempest's force ;

He gains the height and from the giddy brow,
Beholds the wave roll sullenly below ;
No Anna there, rewards his eager sight,
But darker terrors fill the starless night ;
His dying hopes are follow'd by despair,
He calls on Death and breathes his frantic prayer,
He murmurs Anna's name, and from the steep,
Leaps in the bosom of the whelming deep ! 100
What vast delights flow on that glowing breast,
By Virtue strengthen'd and by Genius blest !
Whate'er in Nature beautiful or grand,
In air, or ocean, or the teeming land,
Meets its full view, excites a joy unknown,
To those whom Genius dashes from her throne.
Genius finds speech in trees ; the running brook,
To her speaks language, like a favourite book ;
She dresses Nature in her brightest form,
She hears with rapture the descending storm, . 110
She lists the chiming of the falling stream,
Which lulls to sleep and wakes the airy dream ;
Enwrapt with solitude she loves to tread
O'er rugged hills, or where the green-woods spread ;
To hear the songsters of the lonely grove,
Breathe their sweet strains of gladness and of love :

She loves to wander when the moon's soft ray,
Treads on the footsteps of departing day,
When heavy sadness hangs upon the gale,
And twilight deepens o'er the dusky vale,— 120
By haunted waters, or some ruin'd tower,
Which stands the shock of Time's destroying power,
Where the dim owl directs his dusky flight,
And pours his sorrows on the ear of Night.
The song of bards and Wisdom's ancient page,
Which brave the blasts of each succeeding age;
With fond delight she studies and admires,
And glows and kindles at their sacred fires,
She treads on air, she rises on the wind,
And with them leaves the lagging world behind.
When solitude o'erhangs the tardy hour, 131
She finds within herself a social power.
On life's sad journey she is doom'd to bear,
The sweetest pleasure and the keenest care.
If she be subject to severer woe,
Than cold phlegmatic souls can ever know;
She knows those joys which soar above their sight,
As rolls the planet in the worlds of light.

Once* hardy Genius lov'd Egyptian plains,
 And breath'd her spirit on their shepherd swains,
 She form'd them firmly in one social band, 141
 And spread her influence o'er the happy land;
 The arts uprose—The Muse in infant pride,
 Bade the rich Nile triumphant dash his tide.

The partial muses, then confin'd their song,
 Where fam'd Ilyssus pours his stream along.
 But now forsaken is their favour'd shore,
 Achaia's muse and glory are no more;
 Here once fair scenes lie wrapt in dreary gloom,
 And Taste sits weeping o'er her darling tomb.†

* I had formed the design of shewing the connection of Genius with the social principles, and of tracing the rise, the cultivation and progress of Genius in different countries, particularly in Egypt, Greece, Rome, England and America; but not wishing to extend my poem to too great a length, I have confined myself to this hasty and superficial sketch.

† Greece, once the favoured region of literature and science: Rome once the haughty mistress of the world, have long been sunk under the weight of luxury and corruption, and have long afforded exhibitions of national decay, which hastily succeeds the meridian of splendour. A feeble and effeminate race *now own those hills and plains, once occupied by the most*

No more are heard her bold poetic strains; 151
No Sappho warbling in Ionian plains;

powerful people of the earth. Philosophy has now forsaken their academic shades. Tibur and Ilyssus no longer hear the strains of a Maro, a Flaccus, a Pindar, or a Menander. The head of gold has fallen a prey to time. His cankering tooth has devoured the arms and the trunk; and the iron dust has been blown before the winds of the north.

How dignified is the task of the historian. He bids the laws, the transactions, the revolutions of a people, which are no more, live forever. He bids the hero and the sage, the orator and the poet, though dead, yet speak, and animates by their example. He discovers to nations and to individuals, the rocks of destruction, and points out the paths of safety and success.

What a gloomy subject of contemplation is the fall of empires! what a sublime, but melancholy, pleasure must it be to the traveller to visit the tombs of nations—to sit beneath the mouldering columns of an ancient city—to look back upon the long waste of time—to call to view those characters who once trod upon that ground which is now covered with ruins—to dart forward a searching eye into futurity, and see that thus will terminate all human glory! “After leaving Florence,” (says Gibbon, in his memoirs of his life and writings,) “I compared the solitude of Pisa with the industry of Lucca and Leghorn, and continued my journey through Sienna to Rome, where I

No more are heard the precepts of her sage ;
Nor treads Euripides his moral stage ;
Her orators, her heroes, all are fled !
Nor hurl their vengeance on a Philip's head.

Imperial Rome, then claim'd the Muses' sway,
Who bade her Virgil rival Homer's lay ;
Who bade her Tully, by his finish'd art,
More than Demosthenes controul the heart ; 160
Who bade her Horace sweep his polish'd lyre,
And youthful Lucan burn with raging fire ;

arrived in the beginning of October. My temper is not very susceptible of enthusiasm ; and the enthusiasm which I do not feel, I have ever scorned to affect. But at the distance of twenty-five years, I can neither forget nor express the strong emotions which agitated my mind ~~as~~ I first approached and entered the *eternal city*. After a sleepless night, I trod with a lofty step, the ruins of the Forum ; each memorable spot where Romulus stood, or Tully spoke, or Cæsar fell, was at once present to my eye ; and several days of intoxication were lost or enjoyed before I could descend to a minute investigation. It was at Rome, on the fifteenth of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the capital, while the bare-footed friars were singing vespers in the temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my *mind*."

Who bade her Livy mark the passing age,
And Sallust form his fascinating page.

When Rome had fall'n, then Gothic darkness
spread,

And Genius slumber'd with her mighty dead.

Then mad Oppression rais'd his scourge on high,
And Superstition flash'd her ghastly eye ;

Then Ignorance crept, and hugg'd his iron chains—

Fell Fury stalk'd, blood bursting from his veins—

Then the proud chieftain of each petty clan, 171

In dread subjection held his fellow man—

And the poor vassal, with a servile awe,

Submissive bow'd to his tyrannic law ;

With suppliant knee kiss'd his vindictive rod,

Sunk his high nature, and dishonour'd God.*

At length from Florence breaks a joyous ray,

Which changes darkness to the light of day.

The great Lorenzo†, in one common store,

Collects the mouldering rolls of ancient lore, 180

* See Robertson's account of the feudal system in his first volume of his history of Charles V.—and see Gibbon's decline and fall of the Roman empire.

† See the elegant and entertaining history of Lorenzo De Medicis, by Roscoe :

With princely hand bestows the glittering prize,
And bids Philosophy, once more, arise !
Awakes the powers of harmony and love,
And leads the Muses to his peaceful grove.
See then, where England's whiten'd cliffs ascend,
The arts, with Genius in their course, descend !
There close their wings—there make their lasting
home,
And bid their London vie with ancient Rome.

That work, which no one can read without delight, presents to our view the dawn of literature after the long Gothic night. It disperses the clouds from a period the most important and interesting. It unfolds, in its hero Lorenzo, a magnificence which was princely, and a patronage of learning which we cannot estimate too much. To him the whole literary world is indebted. He collected around him, and cherished, and rewarded the geniuses of the day, and by their exertions snatched from the cells of the monks, and from the ruins of monasteries, where they had long lain mouldering, the precious works of antiquity. It is remarkable that the design of writing the history of Florence under the house of Medicis was formed by Gibbon ; but that design he relinquished to trace the decline and fall of the Roman empire.

See Gibbon's miscellaneous works, vol. i. 109.

What airy visions rise!

What music floats around! 190

What rapture bursts upon mine eyes!

What trembling heaves the ground!

The Genius of our seat

Descends, on wings of air;

Soft zephyrs kiss her twinkling feet,

And wave her golden hair.

She casts her view around

Her scientific throng;

She bids the voice of Music sound,

And Echo waft the song. 200

Sons of Columbus! on whose distant land,

Peace pours her blessings from her bounteous hand;

Whose sail of Commerce, spreads where Ocean roars,

And brings the tribute of a thousand shores.

O hear my voice—my warning words attend!

The sceptre own of an immortal friend!

O! what is Virtue cherish and pursue,

Nor lose this darling object from your view;

Your love, your soul, your whole affections, give

To him who died that rebel man might live; 210

O banish hence that dark and civil rage,
The scourge and curse of this degenerate age ;
Let every breast with social virtue move,
Let every bosom own a brother's love.
Crown'd by your hand, let Learning flourish here ;
And, cloth'd in fogs, bid Dullness disappear ;
Cherish the arts of usefulness and peace :
O let thine own Columbia rival Greece.

Thus Genius spoke—express'd a parent's prayer ;
Rose on the clouds, and melted into air. 220

NOTE.

I HAVE hitherto forbore to speak of American literature. I reserved a few thoughts on this subject, for a closing note. I shall not attempt to conceal the enthusiasm which I feel for meritorious performances of native Americans; nor can I repress my indignation at the unjust manner in which they are treated by the reviews of England. America, notwithstanding their aspersions, has attained an eminence in literature, which is, at least, respectable. Like Hercules in his cradle, she has manifested a gigantic grasp; and discovered that she will be great. The wisdom, penetration, and eloquence of her statesmen are undoubted—they are known and acknowledged throughout Europe. The gentlemen of the law, who fill her benches of justice, and who are heard at the bar, are eminently distinguished

by the powers of reason, and by plausibility of address. In mathematics, in the different branches of natural philosophy, in ethics, and in geographical researches, she has produced several who have excelled. Many of her divines have obtained large stores of the most useful information, have zealously combated with the weapons of persuasion, and have been successful servants in the cause of their master. The colleges, in all the states, have generally chosen their presidents from the body of the clergy.

Our historians have not been numerous. Some, however, who have unrolled our records of truth claim a considerable portion of praise ; although they cannot vie with a Robertson, a Hume, a Stuart, a Rollin, or a Millot. The prospect before us is now brightening. Histories have been promised from pens which have raised our expectations. The death of our great Washington has left a subject for the American historian, which has never been surpassed in dignity. He, if possessed of historical talents, may consider himself, in a literary point of view, as the most fortunate *of men, with whom* judge Washington has depo-

sited the papers of his unequalled kinsman. From the poems and fictions of the Columbian Muse, several works might be selected, which deserve high and distinguishing praise. The poetry of our country has not yet, I hope, assumed its most elevated and elegant form.

Beneath our skies, Fancy neither sickens, nor dies. The fire of poetry is kindled by our storms. Amid our plains, on the banks of our waters, and on our mountains, dwells the spirit of inventive enthusiasm. These regions were not formed, only to echo to the voice of Europe; but from them shall yet sound a lyre which shall be the admiration of the world.

From the exhibitions of American talents, I indulge the warmest expectations. I behold, in imagination, the Newtons, the Miltons, and the Robertsons, of this new world; and I behold the sun of Genius pouring on our land his meridian beams.

In order to concentrate the force of her literature, the Genius of America points to a national university, so warmly recommended, and remembered in his will, by our deceased friend and father

—such an establishment, far more than a pyramid that reached the clouds, would honour the name of Washington.

APPENDIX.

AT the commencement of the preceding poem, it is asserted that Genius cannot easily be defined; that it can be best discovered by its effects: as a view of the beams of the sun, and of the headlong course of a torrent, will give us a fuller conception of them, than the most accurate description. I had designed, in a note, to have given some illustrations of Genius from authors. But as this design would be too extensive for the limits of a note, I have here attached these illustrations to the poem in an Appendix. If I am not deceived they will answer two purposes—They will, in some measure, discover whether my decision

on the authors mentioned in the poem are just, and they will discover Genius in a manner which cannot be defined. On the passages which are produced I shall venture only a few remarks, and leave them to the discernment of the reader. The first instances I shall offer, are taken from the sublimest of all writings, the sacred scriptures. Among the inspired penmen, Isaiah, and the author of the book of Job, hold the first—and David and some of the lesser prophets, the secondary rank on the scale of sublimity. It is to be observed, that the earliest manner of writing was very figurative. It held representations to the view significant and striking. As society advances in refinement, this mode of expression gives way to more polished terms, but less bold and energetic. Hence the fervour of poetry decreases, as refinement and learning increase—Nature loses her simplicity and assumes the vestment of Art. Oftentimes, amidst comparative darkness and ignorance, the sublimest strains of poetry are heard, which a more polished age would imitate in vain. The voice of hardy Genius is not the stream which babbles, but it is the torrent that roars. It is not the whis-

per of the breeze, but it is the loud swell of the storm. It falls not like the rod of down, but like the arm of the Lord. Plainness of language should always be the companion of truth; but this plainness is perfectly consistent with every characteristic of taste, and with figurative expression.—Indeed one pertinent and figurative allusion will oftentimes convey more instruction, and will more powerfully impress the mind, than pages of reasoning. The wide scene of Nature, should not be spread before us in vain:—but thence we should draw applicable and judicious illustrations. These remarks will, in some degree, apply to the Hebrew poetry. There is something in those writings, to the observation of true taste, unspeakably simple, tender and sublime. Their figures are innumerable, bold and energetic. They drew them from two sources—the objects of Nature, and the practice of common life.* The former is the grandest, the latter, perhaps, was most universally intelligible.

* See Lowth's admirable Prelections on Hebrew poetry.

ISAIAH, XIV. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. 23. :
“Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, how hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted and none hindereth. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing. Yea the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, since thou art laid down, no feller hath come up against us. Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from Heaven O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the *ground*, which didst weaken the nations.....

23. I will also make Babylon a possession for the bittern and pools of water—and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of Hosts.”

This passage is remarkable for sublimity. The doom of the subject of the prophecy, the king of Babylon, is described in every circumstance of grandeur and terror. There never was a stronger and more awful personification than that which is contained in the ninth verse. *Hell from beneath is moved to meet thee at thy coming, &c.* And the whole passage bears a correspondent elevation. In the 23d. verse the desolate waste is brought before our view—swept by the besom of destruction—polluted with pools, where “the hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest.” Dr. Young had the spirit of this verse in view, when speaking of the end of the world, he says; “Ruin fiercely drives her plowshare over creation.”

JOB, XXVIII. 20, 22, 23. Whence then cometh wisdom, and where is the place of understanding? 22. Destruction and Death say, we have heard the fame thereof with our ears. 23. God *understandeth* the way thereof, for he looketh to

the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven.".....The greatness of the expression in the 22nd verse will escape no accurate observer.

JOB, IV. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. "Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof, in thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men. Fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my head stood up: It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: An image was before mine eyes; there was silence, and I heard a voice saying, Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his Maker?".....Perhaps an instance of more simple, concise, and forcible description than this relation of Eliphaz of his terrible vision, is not to be found.

Without giving room to any more quotations from scripture, let me refer the reader to the 51st chapter of Isaiah—to the 18th and 104th Psalm, to the last chapter of Habakuk, to the song of

Moses, to David's elegy over Saul and Jonathan, and to the description, in Job, of the war-horse.

The finest passages in Milton are his picture of Satan—Satan's address to the sun—Adam's and Eve's morning hymn, the description of God's call to the regions of Chaos, and his circumscription of the limits of the world. But these have been so often remarked and pointed out, that it would be unnecessary to repeat them. I shall, therefore, select some others, which, though inferior to these, will bear the prominent marks of sublimity:

“ Before their eyes, in sudden view, appear
The secrets of the hoary deep ; a dark,
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth and
height,
And time, and place are lost ; where eldest Night,
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by Confusion stand.”

PAR. LOST, B. V. 890.

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Abraham declares, that between heaven and hell

there is a great gulf fixed. Observe, in the lines just quoted, how Milton has seized on this hint, and drawn a picture of that gulf, which the painter would attempt in vain. The light of Milton's soul could only lead us in such impenetrable darkness, into that "illimitable ocean, without bound, without dimension ; where length, breadth, and height, and time, and place are lost."

" These then, tho' unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain ; nor think tho' men were none,
That Heaven would want spectators, God want
praise ;

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep :
All these, with ceaseless praise, his works behold
Both day and night : how often from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket, have we heard
Celestial voices, to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator? oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds,

In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thought to heaven."

BOOK IV. 674.

In these lines is represented the gloom of night enlightened by the lustre of the heavenly bodies. This picture, without any attending circumstance, is grand and solemn. The view of the skies by night, the moon moving in the brightness of her course, and all the host of heaven performing their determined round, fill the mind with awe and adoration. But how wonderfully is the sublimity of the scene heightened by the introduction of aerial beings, walking their nightly round, contemplating the heavens, and to the "midnight air, sole, or responsive each to other's note, singing their great Creator." The famous night-scene of Homer, and all the night scenes ever drawn, are inferior to this.

"But see the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit,
Back to the gates of heaven: the sulphurous hail
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice

Of heaven received us falling ; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow thro' the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn
Or satiate fury yield it from the foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of Desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves ;
There rest, if any rest can harbour there,
And reassembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope ;
If not, what resolution from despair.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate
With head uplift above the waves ; and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large
Lay floating many a rood."

This passage is throughout sublime. The grandeur and correspondent harmony of the numbers are wonderful. No comment is necessary to point out its particular excellence. We see in it all the fallen greatness of "the Arch-angel," and the inventive rebellion of his heart.

Though *Paradise Regained* is eclipsed by the superior lustre of *Paradise Lost*; yet it contains many eminent beauties. Had it been written by any other pen than Milton's, it would perhaps have been more read, and been more celebrated: But the voice of criticism, having ranked it far beneath the other great work of its author, it is now doomed, with Homer's *Odyssey*, to a partial oblivion. It deserves not this fate; for it is still the strain of Milton, which, like Apollo's lyre, has descended from the heavens. The following passage will shew if these remarks be just. It presents a picture of our Saviour, amid the terrors of the wilderness, still pursued by the temptation and malice of Satan.

Though the whole of the passage is highly admirable, yet there are two lines, marked in italics, *in which centres its principal grandeur.*

.....“ Darkness now rose,
As day-light sunk, and brought in low’ring night
Her shadowy offspring, unsubstantial both,
Privation mere of light and absent day.
Our Saviour meek and with untroubled mind
After his airy jaunt, tho’ hurry’d sore,
Hungry and cold betook him to his rest,
Wherever, under some concourse of shades
Whose branching arms thick intertwin’d might
 shield,
From dews and damps of night, his shelter’d head,
But shelter’d slept in vain; for at his head
The tempter watch’d, and soon with ugly dreams
Disturb’d his sleep; and either tropic now
’Gan thunder, and both ends of heaven the clouds
From many a horrid rift abortive pour’d
Fierce rain with lightning mixt, water with fire
In ruin reconcil’d: Nor slept the winds
Within their stony caves, but rush’d abroad
From the four hinges of the world, and fell
On the vex’d wilderness, whose tallest pines,
Tho’ rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks
Bow’d their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,
Or torn up sheer: Ill wast thou shrouded then,

O patient son of God, *yet only stood'st*
Unshaken ; nor yet staid the terror there,
 Infernal ghosts, and hellish furies, round
 Environ'd thee, some howl'd, some yell'd, some
 shriek'd,

Some bent at thee their fiery darts ; while thou
Sat'st unappall'd in calm and sinless peace.

Thus pass'd the night so foul, till morning fair
 Came forth with pilgrim steps in amice gray ;
 Who with her radiant fingers still'd the roar
 Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,
 And grisly spectres, which the fiend had rais'd
 To tempt the son of God with terrors dire.

PARADISE REGAINED, B. IV.

Homer in age and sublimity in action, approaches nearer than any other poet to the inspired writers. Early criticism has frowned upon him in vain. Time has increased the veneration bestowed upon his name. Since he sang to his harp, ages have rolled on ; heard his song and admired. His faults have been called blots in the sun, which can scarcely be discovered amid the continued glory of his beams. From his Iliad it is difficult

to select a passage to which preference should be given. The battle of the gods, the interview of Priam and Achilles, the night-scene, the combat of Hector and Ajax, and the apparition of Patroclus, have generally obtained the highest meed of praise. I offer the following passage, which has been less frequently noticed than those which have been mentioned, but which is undoubtedly equal to either of them, in most characteristics of Genius. It is the description of Achilles, after his reconciliation with Agamemnon, preparing for battle.

Full in the midst, high-tow'ring o'er the rest,
His limbs in arms divine Achilles drest;
Arms which the Father of the fire bestowed,
Forg'd on the eternal anvils of the God.
Grief and revenge his furious heart inspire,
His glowing eye-balls roll with living fire.

The silver cuishes first his thighs enfold;
Then o'er his breast was brac'd the hollow gold.
The brazen sword a various baldric ty'd
That, starr'd with gems, hung glittering at his side;

And, like the moon, the broad refulgent shield,
Blaz'd with long rays, and gleam'd athwart the
field.

So to night wand'ring sailors pale with fears,
Wide o'er the watry waste a light appears,
Which on the far-seen mountain blazing high,
Streams from some lonely watch-tower to the sky:
With mournful eyes they gaze and gaze again:
Loud howls the storm and drives them o'er the
main.

Next his high head the helmet grac'd; behind;
The sweepy crest hung floating in the wind;
Like the red star that from his flaming hair,
Shakes down diseases pestilence and war;
So stream'd the golden honours from his head,
Trembled the sparkling plumes, and the loose glo-
ries shed.

The chief beholds himself with wond'ring eyes,
His arms, he poises and his motions tries:
Buoy'd by some inward force he seems to swim,
And feels a pinion lifting every limb.

And now he shakes his great paternal spear,
Pond'rous and huge! which not a Greek could rear.

From Pelion's cloudy top an ash entire,
Old Chiron fell'd and shap'd it for his siré;
A spear which stern Achilles only wields,
The death of heroes, and the dread of fields."

BOOK XIX. 390.

The most striking beauties of Shakspeare, have been so often noticed, and so often brought into view, that were those repeated here which have received most praise, though they might serve as illustrations, they would have no charms of novelty. I have therefore selected one passage from Henry VI. which I have never seen quoted; and which I think, in the united qualities of pathos and sublimity, Shakspeare has never surpassed:

" Ah! who is nigh? come to me, friend or foe,
And tell me who is victor, York or Warwick?
Why ask I that? my mangled body shews;
My blood, my want of strength, my sick heart
shews

That I must yield my body to the earth,
And, by my fall, the conquest to my foe;
Thus yields the cedar to the axe's edge,
Whose arms gave shelter to the princely eagle;

Under whose shade the ramping lion slept;
Whose top-branch overpeer'd Jove's spreading tree,
And kept low shrubs from Winter's powerful wind.
These eyes that now are dimm'd with Death's
black veil,
Have been as piercing as the mid-day sun
To search the secret treasons of the world.
The wrinkles in my brow, now fill'd with blood,
Were liken'd oft to kingly sepulchres;
For who liv'd king but I could dig his grave?
And who durst smile when Warwick bent his brow?
Lo! now my glory, smear'd in dust and blood,
My parks, my walks, my manors that I had,
Ev'n now forsake me; and, of all my lands,
Is nothing left me but my body's length."

—That the greatness of this dying speech of the earl of Warwick, may be more fully seen, it must be remembered that he was the most powerful subject that surrounded the English throne—that he was unrivalled in the annals of chivalry, and from the excess of his power, was, in those times, called, the king maker and the king destroyer. He was, as he says, the shade beneath which the lion slept, and where the people sought protec-

tion and safety. His arm defended his king, and his arm was a bulwark to the nation. Whether this speech is most sublime or most pathetic is difficult to be determined. It is, however, unquestionably both. All the dignity of Warwick remains and increases at his death; but the death of so great a character is followed by sadness—as the shadows of night come after the descent of the sun.

When we open Ossian we are immediately introduced into fairy regions. In the days of this bard, superstition prevailed. Every dusky hill was believed to be the abode of a spirit, who mingled his shriek with the voice of the blast. It is unaccountable, that incredulity should deny the authenticity of Ossian's poems. There is no evidence wanting to convince all who are willing to believe. Poems are still repeated in the original Erse, by many aged persons in the Highlands, and by some persons whom I have seen in this country, who obtained them from their fathers: and that these are the same poems which Mr. M'Pherson has given to the world in an English dress, characters

of the highest veracity and literary reputation have positively declared. What further evidence could we require? But this is not all; for even were every external evidence banished—were there none who spoke the Erse, in which the poems were delivered—had M'Pherson declared them to be his—those who study them could with difficulty believe him; for every internal evidence declares that they could not be written in the present day; so widely different is the state of society which they describe, from that which now exists. But I have digressed. I thought this tribute due to one of the sublimest bards who has appeared in our world—whose genius ranks with Homer's, and Milton's, and Shakspeare's, and with Fingal, "yields not to mortal man.".....The extract which I shall take from Ossian, is the episode of Orla. I have chosen it because there is no passage of which the reader can better judge, when separated from the whole.

"Who is that, like a cloud, at the rock of the roaring stream? He cannot bound over its course; yet stately is the chief! his bossy shield is on his

side; and his spear, like the tree of the desert: Youth of the dark-brown hair art thou of Fingal's foes?" "I am a son of Lochlin," he cries "and strong is mine arm in war. My spouse is weeping at home; but Orla will never return." "Or fights or yields the hero," said Fingal of the noble deeds—"foes do not conquer in my presence: but my friends are renowned in the hall. Son of the wave follow me; partake of the feast of my shells; pursue the deer of my desert; and be the friend of Fingal." "No," said the hero "I assist the feeble: my strength shall remain with the weak in arms. My sword has been always unmatched, O warrior: let the king of Morven yield." "I never yielded Orla, Fingal never yielded to man. Draw thy sword and chuse thy foe. Many are my heroes." "and does the king refuse the combat," said Orla with the dark-brown hair? "Fingal is a match for Orla, and he alone of all his race. But king of Morven, if I shall fall, (as one day the warrior must die,) raise my tomb in the midst, and let it be the greatest on Lena. And send over the dark-blue wave, the sword of Orla to the

spouse of his love; that she may shew it to her son with tears, to kindle his soul to war." "Son of the mournful tale," said Fingal "why dost thou awaken my tears? one day the warriors must die, and the children see their useless arms in the hall. But Orla thy tomb shall rise, and thy white-bosomed spouse, weep over thy sword." They fought on the heath of Lena, but feeble was the arm of Orla. The sword of Fingal descended and cleft his shield in twain. It fell, and glittered on the ground, as the moon on the stream of night. "King of Morven," said the hero, "lift thy sword and pierce my breast. Wounded and faint from battle my friends have left me here. The mournful tale shall come to my love on the streamy Loda; when she is alone in the wood; and the rustling blast in the leaves." "No;" said the king of Morven, "I will never wound thee Orla. On the banks of Loda, let her see thee escaped from the hands of war. Let thy gray-haired father, who perhaps is blind with age, hear the sound of thy voice in the hall. With joy let the hero rise and search for his son with his hands."

"But never will he find him, Fingal," said the youth of the streamy Loda, "on Lena's heath I shall die; and foreign bards will talk of me. My broad belt covers my wound of death. And now I give it to the wind." "The dark-blood poured from his side, he fell pale on the heath of Lena. Fingal bends over him as he dies."

FINGAL, BOOK V.

This extract, as the preceeding, is both pathetic and grand. It is one of the poems held in remembrance in its original language; by many in the north of Scotland, and is considered by them as uncommonly beautiful and affecting. The heroism and generosity of Fingal are finely contrasted with the fortitude of Orla, in misfortune. Fingal appears in all the glory of victory and in all the amiableness of humanity. Orla, sinking under a mortal wound while the thoughts of his spouse and the banks of Loda rushed upon his heart—still rises superior to his situation, and dies while Fingal bends over him in admiration.

These illustrations, with the observations connected with them have proceeded to a length so

far beyond that which I expected; that I shall omit several passages, I had marked in other poets; and shall only further offer the following instances in prose.

“Truth is compared in scriptures to a *streaming fountain*; if her waters flow not in perpetual progression, they *sicken into a muddy pool* of conformity and tradition.

“Truth came once into our world with her divine master, and was a perfect shape, most glorious to look on: but when he ascended, and his disciples after him were *laid asleep*, then strait arose a wicked race of deceivers, who, as that story goes of the *Egyptian Typhon*, with his conspirators, how they dealt with the good Osiris, took the *virgin Truth*, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds. From that time ever since, the sad friends of Truth, such as durst appear, immitating the careful search that Isis made for the mangled body of Osiris, went up and down gathering up limb by limb, still as they could find them. We have not yet found them all lords and commons, nor ever shall do,

till her master's second coming; he shall bring together every joint and member, and shall mould them into an *immortal feature of loveliness and perfection*. Suffer not these licensing prohibitions to stand at every place of opportunity, forbidding and disturbing them that continue seeking, that continue to do our obsequies to the torn body of our martyred saint. We boast our light; but if we look not wisely on the sun itself it *smites us into darkness*. Who can discern those planets that are oft *combust*, and those stars of brightest magnitude, that rise and set with the sun, until the opposite motion of their orbs, bring them to such a place in the firmament, where they may be seen evening or morning?

“Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself *like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks*: methinks I see her as an eagle muing her mighty young, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam; purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with

those also that love the twilight, flutter about amaz'd at what she means, and in their envious gabble, would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms."

*Milton's speech for the Liberty of
unlicensed Printing.*

"Wisdom hath always a good conscience attending it, that purest delight and richest cordial of the soul; *that brazen wall and impregnable fortress* against both external assaults, and internal commotions.

"If a fool prosper, the honour is attributed to propitious chance; if he miscarry to his own ill management: but the entire glory of happy undertakings, crowns the head of wisdom; while the disgrace of unlucky events falls elsewhere. His light like that of the sun, cannot totally be eclipsed; it may be dimmed but never extinguished, and *always maintains a day though overclouded with misfortune.* Who less esteems the famous African captain for being overthrown in that last famous battle, wherein he is said to have shewn the best skill, and yet endured the worst success?

Who contemns Cato, and other the grave citizens of Rome, for embracing the just, but unprosperous cause of the common-wealth? A wise man's circumstances may vary and fluctuate, *like floods about a rock*; but he persists unmoveably the same, and his reputation unshaken: for he can always render a good account of his actions, and by reasonable apology, elude the assaults of reproach."

BARROW.

These passages which I have quoted, are selected from numbers in the same authors equally solid and lustrous. The expressions which appeared to me most striking, are designated by italics. The political and miscellaneous productions of the writer of *Paradise Lost*, are mines of intellectual gold; they contain perhaps as many burning thoughts of Genius as his poems. Barrow, the predecessor of the great Newton, in the mathematic chair of Cambridge, is justly entitled to a rank among the most copious and energetic divines of the Christian church. There is a remnant of antiquity in the stile and manner of both these original authors, which may displease the

ear, attuned to the lulling harmony of the periods of the present day: but the strength and spirit of their figures, their boldness and elevation of thought, no one can mistake,

Let the reader of discernment and feeling examine particularly the prosaic works of Milton—let him become familiarised with his manner—let him learn to follow his vigorous and ascending wings—and he will probably say that he is not only the first poet, but one of the most eloquent rhetoricians, and gigantic reasoners, that the English nation has ever produced,

“ Many works of genius and learning, have been performed in states of life, that appear very little favourable to thought or enquiry: so many that he who considers them, is inclined to think that he sees interprise and perseverance predominating over all external agency, and bidding help and hindrance vanish before them. The Genius of Shakspeare was not to be depressed by the weight of poverty, nor limited by the narrow conversation to which men in want are inevitably condemned; the incumbrances of his fortune were


shaken from his mind, *as dew-drops from a lion's mane.*"

JOHNSON.

"He, whose soul reposes on his firm trust in God, like the halcyon that builds on the waves, if storms arise, may be tossed, but not endangered. Or, grant the worst, those tumultuous billows that devour others, rock him to rest eternal."

YOUNG.

"Sire, if the poison of ambition reach and infect the heart of the prince; if the sovereign forgetting that he is the protector of the public tranquillity, prefer his own glory to the love and to the safety of his people; if he would rather subdue provinces than reign in their hearts; if it appear to him more glorious to be the destroyer of his neighbours, than the father of his people; if the voice of grief and desolation be the only sound that attends his victories; if he use that power which is only given him for the happiness of those he governs, to promote his own passions and interest; in a word if he be a king solely to spread misery, and like the monarch of Babylon, erect the idol of his greatness on the wreck of nations; great God! what a scourge for the earth!



what a present dost thou send to men, in thy wrath, by giving them such a master! His glory, Sire, will ever be steeped in blood. Some insane panegyrists may chaunt his victories, but the provinces, the towns, the villages will weep. Superb monuments may be erected to eternise his conquests: but the ashes yet smoking of so many cities formerly flourishing; but the desolation of countries despoiled of their beauty; but the ruins of so many edifices, under which peaceable citizens have perished; but the lasting calamities that will survive him; will be mournful monuments that will immortalize his folly and his vanity: he will have passed like a torrent that destroys, not like a majestic river, spreading joy and abundance: his name will be inscribed in the annals of posterity, among conquerors, but never among good kings: the history of his reign will be recollected, only to revive the memory of the evil he has done to mankind.”

MASSILLON.

If these copious extracts are admired as much by the reader as they deserve, I will not have trespassed on his patience. I have introduced

them with the pleasing hope that they will furnish a repast to cultivated taste, and that they will serve as fires kindled upon a hill, to enlighten the boundless region, where the eagle builds his nest.

A MIDNIGHT HYMN,

TO DEITY.



A MIDNIGHT HYMN,

TO DEITY.

How grand and awful is this midnight
hour!

The world is still—and not a sound disturbs

The breeze that bathes its pinions in the dew.

The moon looks dimly down; the lowering clouds

Obscure her beams. The fleeting foot of Time

Moves swiftly on, and steals from sleeping man.

The solemn bell repeats another hour,

And gives it to the numbers that have pass'd.

I sit alone: But there's an eye beholds me,

To which the darkness is the noon of day. 10

To thee my God, I give these solemn thoughts,

And seek thy spirit in the depths of night.

While rest the follies of a giddy world,

While all its scenes and all its noise are fled,

Truths strike the mind with ~~more~~ impressive force.

Almighty Power in his eternal counsels

Design'd a world the Theatre of Love.

He spoke; all nature hear'd his awful voice.



The sun roll'd burning from the hand of God.

The vales and mountains spread beneath his beams;

And in their channels flowed the wandering waters.

The moonlight trembled thro' the shades of Eve, 22

And led the train of Night. Then joy arose.

The voice of Music lull'd the peaceful scene;

And thro' the thickets sang the hollow breeze.

The fragrant herb wav'd to the breath of morn.

The fowls of Heaven uprose upon the wing;

And the deep forest shelter'd in its arms

The Brutes that roam'd its haunts.

“Let us make man”—spoke then Almighty power,

In image like his God; and let his rule 31

Be over earth, and all that earth contains.”

'Then from the dust, see man to being rise,
Firm and erect, with eye upturn'd to Heaven,
He spurns the earth beneath him with his feet,
And sways his sceptre o'er the prostrate world.

Array'd in glory like his father God,
Man thus abode not—but from honour fell.
The gates of Paradise were closed against him,
Its shades no more would shelter his repose; 40
“Where came the voice of God at early morn.”
Its cooling stream would no more meet his lip,
Or babble to his ear. A dreary world,
Spread wide before his view, where toil and pain
Stood arm'd, to bear him on the road of life;
While o'er him howl'd the dark and angry sky.

O son of morn—how art thou fall'n from Heaven
And all thy former splendour dim'd and lost!

Man ruin'd in his first and high estate
Affords a subject gloomy to the soul. 50
The fall of angels was the fall of man.
“Shorn of his beams” the Sun, in dim eclipse,
Lends but a feeble lustre to the earth:
Or when he sinks beneath the western wave,
Pale Evening treads upon his burning footsteps
And brings grim Night to throw his mantle o'er

A sunken world, lock'd in a mimic death.
Thus on the morning of man's towering hopes,
Came the dark night of woe. His happiness
Is now a little bark thrown on the floods, 60
And toss'd and dash'd by wild tempestuous winds.

By Adam's disobedience earth was curs'd.
In Nature's garden thorns and thistles grew :
Chill o'er the vallies swept the howling blast,
The thunders roar'd—the earthquake shook the
globe ;

The mountains pour'd their streams of liquid fire,
And, like a Giant, fell Disease arose
And blew o'er earth his pestilential breath.

A train of evils followed on his steps ;
There came Misfortune with his iron scythe 70
Dropping with human blood ; there Envy stalk'd
And fan'd the flames of hell—fell Fury there
Yell'd to the winds and stamp'd the hollow ground,
Telling her sorrows to the listening Night :
There came wan Melancholy slowly on ;
Folded her arms upon her heaving bosom,
Her face directed to the dewy moon.
There came Remorse absorb'd in gloomy thought :

There rush'd Despair—his dark eye roll'd in blood;
He tore the mantle from his raging breast, 80
And plung'd his dagger in his heart—There came
Poor Lunacy in tatter'd robes, and wav'd
A straw, and told the kingdoms which he rul'd.
Lastly came Death cloth'd in his night of terrors,
And clasp'd his victims in his shivering arms.

The heavy blow of Time strikes to the dust
The stately battlement, where Pride enthron'd
Laugh'd at long ages rolling o'er its head;
The blasts of Night pour thro' its vacant hall,
It totters o'er the ashes of its ruins, 90
And overlooks the dreary, boundless waste.
Decay is mark'd on all that earth contains.
We tread on ruins, and on human bones.

The sun himself shall quench in time his beams,
And like the trembling taper in its socket
Shall die away, and bring no other morn.

How* sits the city dark and solitary,
Where people throng'd, and joy and tumult reign'd;
Like a lorn widow she in silence mourns

* Lamentation of Jeremiah.

Her sons, her grandeur lost. The woeful night
She weeps ; and morning rises on her tears. 101
How sits the city dark and solitary,
And buries all her honours in the grave.

A soul diseas'd, far more than mouldering
matter,

Presents to man a spectacle of woe.

Say what is Babylon, low sunk in earth?

Or what Palmyra in the dreary waste,

To man in ruins? To the soul diseas'd,

The soul immortal, doom'd to joy or woe?

There once impress'd was God the Father's image ;

But now that image is defac'd by sin. 111

O'er Greece's ruins once the traveller wept,

As he look'd back upon her former glory,

While o'er the world she held her sovereign sway,

And trampled tyrants underneath her feet. 120

Now sunk her honours, and her former fame

Lives in her records and her poet's song:

Her laurels flourish round her mouldering urn.

O hasty traveller thro' the vale of tears,

O stay thy step, and weep o'er wretched man!

Weep o'er those honours fall'n, fall'n so low ;

Talk not of dignity, but humbly look
On him who died, that man might live again.

Away thou folly of an empty world,
Thou airy bubble gilded by the sun ! 130
Come to my heart, thou sovereign hope of Heaven,
Reign o'er my actions and my wandering thoughts ;
My bed of death illuminate ; and lead
A son of sorrow to his father's home.
O what is life without the love of God,
Without the arm of Mercy to support
A sinner without strength. Eternity,
Thou ocean boundless, where the thought is lost.
Our years and ages are to thee unknown,
Thy moments are eternal. Time was not, 140
Thou didst exist ; and thou shalt still move on
When time shall sweep his iron scythe no more.
O then receive me to thy arms my God !

Upon a cross, behold the king of glory,
The man who dies for a rebellious world,
Who from an heart still warm with love divine,
Pours on the earth his blood ; who dies in mercy,
That man might live beneath his father's smile.

The wrath of God here centres on the head
Of his anointed son. The eyes of heaven 150

Behold in wonder this triumphant scene.
Bright seraphs burning round Jehovah's throne,
Strike their full harps and chant redeeming grace.

Dark rose the hill where stood the saviour's cross
The scene of love; and blackest deed of hell.
Where erst the father of the faithful, bound
His son (so 'tis believ'd) by God's command.*

Surrounding armies aw'd the multitude,
And Rome appear'd in her assembled hosts.
Dim by the Cross stalk'd Cruelty and Rage, 160
And pierc'd the Saviour's bosom with their sting.
Fell mockery breath'd its most reproachful taunts,
And shouts of exultation rent the air.

Serene, conspicuous hung the dying God.
His sacred head is pierc'd with horrid thorns.
His arms are nail'd to the accursed tree.
His bosom opened by a Soldier's spear.
No curse, or threatening pass his placid lips;
He prays for blessings on the murderer's head.

* The mountain upon which Abraham was about to sacrifice his son Isaac, is supposed by some, and upon no improbable grounds, to have been the same mountain on which Christ suffered on his cross.

Father have mercy! on my thoughtless foes, 170

Have mercy God! they know not what they do.

'Tis *finish'd*—cries the Saviour, while he dies,
And yields his spirit to his Father's hands.

Nature beheld the awful scene with dread.

The source of Being dying on the cross,

Surpass'd conception of Almighty love.

The sun grew dim, dark shadows quench'd his
beam,

And Night's thick mantle fell upon the world;

An earthquake shook the globe; the rocks are cleft,

The temple's veil is rent in twain; the dead 180

Awake, arise and leave their darksome graves.

The mighty work of Christ is now perform'd.

A world is ransom'd from the depths of woe.

Justice has sheath'd the dreadful sword of wrath;

And God is reconcil'd with sinful man.

The weary traveller now rests in peace;

The Saviour rests lock'd in the arms of Death:

His pulse has ceas'd to beat: the clotted gore

Hangs thick and cold upon his face and breast.

Lift up your heads ye everlasting doors, 190

And let the king of Glory enter in!

The Saviour rests ; the tomb receives his prey
With chilling arms. The voice of mockery,
The taunt of malice, and the shout of triumph
Strike on his ear no more, That eye which look'd
Thro' painful life, and pity'd with a tear,
Is seal'd in night. And clos'd the listening ear
Which never heard affliction plead in vain.
Those arms lie lifeless, which so often rais'd
Implor'd for mercy on a wretched world. 200
The Saviour sleeps—the traveller rests in peace.
T'was love divine that drew him down from heaven.
T'was love divine that bade our Saviour die,
Love for a world, a lost rebellious world ;
Who met his gracious embassy with scorn.

Long had he journey'd on a rugged road,
And knew not where to rest his weary head.
Rage and Derision hung upon his footsteps.
His friends were few—his joys were fewer still,
His face was care, without one mingled smile. 210
The object of his mission was to suffer,
And Sorrow wrapt him in her deepest night.
He trod in wretchedness this scene of life ;
For man, for whom he suffered, was to bear

His heavy load of guilt—and die the death ;
And Jesus meant his life a great example
To all who live, in all that's great and good.

The shade of sorrow is the field of glory :
Calamity breathes on the seeds of Virtue.
He who has never known the woe-worn thought,
Who always glides o'er the unruffled stream,
Could never stem the ocean, lash'd by winds,
Or brave his rolling billows after storms.

Thou God of Nature, and thou God of Love
Who form'd this world, who bade those planets roll,
Who call'd all Being from the womb of night,
Accept my song, and tune my heart to praise ;
O breath thy Spirit in the souls of men,
And send thy Gospel to the darkened world.
How far beneath thy majesty divine, 230
Is every tribute from a mortal's lyre.
Those spheres which move in harmony above,
Whose silver lustre slumbers on the earth,
Shall give thee nobler strains. The Seraph's harp
Shall raise the song of Glory to the Lamb
And universal Nature sound thy praise.



AN ADDRESS

TO

MY TAPER.

MY Taper lend thy glimmering ray,

O give me all thy little light!

Departed is the orb of Day,

And o'er the city falls the night.

The bustle of the passing throng,

The chariot rattling by the door,

The loud and boisterous vender's song,

Strike on my startling ear no more.

Now gathering storms the sky o'erspread,

And sweep with ruffian-blasts the plain,

Now on my window and my shed,

Descends the chill and beating rain.


Protected from the angry sky,
Bless'd with the smile of kind repose,
Still may I know Compassion's sigh,
And keenly feel for others woes.

On such a night old legends tell,
(While lowering clouds the sky o'ercast,)
Aerial beings pour their yell,
And spread their pinions to the blast.

On such a night did Shakspeare hear,
His Ariel singing his wild strains,
On such a night his listening ear,
Heard spirits chaunting on the plains.

O then, on this enchanting page,
My taper, throw thy friendly beam—
And let me mark the long-past age,
And rove along Ilyssu's stream.

O let me catch that matchless song,
Which comes from old Achaia's lyre,
And wafted to the Olympic throng,
Bask in the blaze of Pindar's fire.



How fast thy slender form decays !

Still, still a little longer stay ;

Now in the socket falls thy blaze—

It flutters, and it dies away.

How like thy dim and dying flame,

The sons of Genius and of lore !

Whose souls too ardent for their frame,

Burn till their pulse can beat no more.

THE FAREWELL SONG

OF

OSSIAN.

THE FOLLOWING LINES ARE AN ATTEMPT TO THROW
INTO THE MEASURED FORM OF POETRY, A PART OF
THE POEM OF BERBATHON.

LEAD son of Alpin, lead me to the woods—
Dark roll the waves ; loud sweep the hollow winds ;
The leaves are scattered o'er the misty heath ;
No hunter's step is heard.

Bends not a tree o'er Mora's banks of moss,
With naked branches whistling to the wind ?
There hangs my harp upon a blasted bough,
And mournful sound its strings.

Lead Son of Alpin, lead me to my harp,
Another song shall rise from Ossian's hand;
Amid the sound my spirit shall depart,
And meet my fathers in their airy hall.

Be near ye winds, and bear upon your wings,
The dying strain to mighty Fingal's ear!
O let him hear his son's departing voice
Whose head is bow'd with years!

The aged oak that sighs with all its moss,
The wither'd fern that hangs its head with mist,
The ruin'd wall that shakes beneath the storm,
Are like my faded form.

The night descends. No pale cold moon is seen,
No red-star glimmering thro' the darkened cloud.
The rain-drops rustle thro' the naked trees,
And all is drear and dark.

At morning's dawn the hunter, as he treads
These plains and mountains, in pursuit of deer,
Will search for Ossian, and will find him cold
And stretch'd upon the rock.

He'll tear his hair—the tear will wet his cheek;
 He'll weep o'er Ossian and his sleeping harp.
 Son of the chase, then let my tomb arise,
 On Lutha's lovely plain!

The Northern blasts unfold thy gates, O king! *
 And I behold thee gleaming in thy arms;
 Thy ghostly form is like a watery cloud
 Which dims the stars with tears.

Thy shield is like the old decaying moon,
 Thy sword a vapour kindled into fire,
 Thy steps, O chief! are on the desart-winds,
 Thy hand can darken storms.

What murmur's that which comes upon my ear?
 The storm abates; and all the air is still—
 Great Fingal's warning voice I hear, which says,
 "Come Ossian, come away.

"Fingal has had his fame. He pass'd away
 Like flames which fill'd and lightened all the world,
 Tho' dark and silent are our fields of war,
Our fame is on the four gray stones.

“ Why Ossian Son of Fingal art thou sad?
 Long, long have fled the chiefs of other times.
 The sons of future times shall pass away,
 Another race shall rise.

“ All men are like the dark and rolling waves,
 Like leaves dispers'd before the rising wind,
 Ev'n Fingal's footsteps are no longer heard
 Within his airy hall.

“ Thy voice, O Son of Fingal, has been heard.
 The harp of Selma was not strung in vain,
 Thy tale is told. Come Ossian, come away
 And meet me in the clouds.”

And come I will, my father, king of men!
 My spear is weak. The life of Ossian fails.
 My steps no more are seen on Selma's plains,
 Or Crona's mournful flood.

On Mora's stone shall Ossian fall asleep,
 And give his gray-locks to the winds of night.
 Sleep seals my eyes—the night is long and dark,
But all his storms shall not disturb my rest.

MAD MARY.

I PAUS'D to hear a wild and plaintive strain,
Which rose complaining on the evening breeze,
“ Ah! 'tis poor Mary,” said a passing swain,
“ Nightly she sings beneath those darksome trees.
“ Once she was gladsome, and the fairest maid,
That ever bless'd or trod our rural plain ;
But by a villain Mary was betray'd ;
She never laugh'd—she never smil'd again.
“ Sad, ruin'd maid, she loves to be alone,
She flies and hides her sorrow in the wood,
That there unnotic'd she may pour her moan,
And give indulgence to her wayward mood.

Oft have I seen her climb the hillock's height,
And sit and murmur o'er the brawling stream,
Oft have I seen her at the dead of night,
Rove wet with dew and watch the moon's pale
beam.

"I've seen her with a willow bind her head,
And twine her robe of white with wreaths of
green,
Ah! Sir I fear that Mary's wits have fled—
So chang'd is she, from what she once has been."

The Swain pass'd on—Excited by his tale,
I stood and listen'd to Mad Mary's lay:
Her accents wafted on the mournful gale,
Were these; I wrote them by the lunar ray.

"Henry has left me—left me all alone,
Left me to struggle in this world of woe;
His heart was harder than this mossy stone,
His love was colder than the winter's snow.

"Poor Mary's sad. The world cares not for me.
A crazy bark I am, toss'd by the wave.
My cruel Henry whither dost thou flee?
Return and weep o'er Mary's early grave.

“ Once I was fair, for Henry told me so ;
The village clowns turn’d after me and gaz’d ;
But now their fingers mock me as I go,
They pity me, and say that I am craz’d.

“ Perhaps ’tis so—and why should I complain ?
These tatter’d garments and this tangled hair,
An eye that rolls in wildness and in pain,
May well to all, a phrenzied state declare.

Far from the hated world, then let me fly,
Throw o’er me woods your deep and friendly
shade,
Expose me not to man’s insulting eye,
And let no footstep on my haunts invade !

“ Ye dews of Night descend upon my breast,
And quench its raging and consuming flame !
Come lingering death and give poor Mary rest,
In thy embraces let me hide my shame !”

AN EPISTLE TO A FRIEND,

WITH

THE POEM

ON THE

POWERS OF GENIUS.

HEALTH to Licinius, my warm wishes send,
Health and all blessings, to my favour'd friend—
May heaven, indulgent to my fervent prayer,
Make thee the object of continual care;
May no rude hand thy museful peace molest,
Or wound the quiet of thy feeling breast.

Time, whose swift wings no human force can stay,
Has borne his months, his darkening years away,
Since last we met beneath thy cheerful shed,
And talk'd of scenes which have forever fled;

Together read the rich and classic page,
And liv'd with Homer in his epic age,
Rov'd o'er the plains and sought the mountain's
height,

To cast o'er Nature our extended sight.

Now busy Fancy calls before my view,
Those early days which I have spent with you,
When village-boys, with hearts of merry glee,
To school we went and "whistled o'er the lea,"
When o'er the fields, light as the Summer's wind
We flew, and left each anxious thought behind.
When wasting pains and manhood's brooding woes,
Broke not the slumbers of our gay repose,
When Academic bell, which called to prayer,
Rous'd us from couches undisturb'd by care,
When sallying forth we hail'd the peep of dawn,
And brush'd the dew-drops glittering on the lawn.

Now far have fled these days of fairy joys,
And wider views our riper thought employs;
But still those meet our retrospective sight,
And leave a sorrow mingled with delight.
We now have left the school-room and the hall,
And now are soldiers at our master's call;

The Foes of Virtue, we are call'd to engage,
To lash the follies of an impious age.
Then cautious let us steer the bark of Youth,
With Friendship leagued and innocence and truth,
Let us not rashly dangerous depths explore,
Nor shrink with terror when the billows roar;
Firm in our trust let us thro' seas contend,
And on the arm Omnipotent depend.

Tho' fools may laugh and meet us with disdain,
Let us proceed, and bid them laugh in vain.
What tho' unknown to Honour and to Fame,
And greatness owns no letter of our name,
'Then we'll escape all their consuming woes,
Nor know those cares which haughty grandeur
knows.

Beneath the storm in peace and safety dwell,
The straw-thatch'd cottage and the silent cell;
But shook by winds the oak's thick branches spread,
And lightnings blast the towering mountain's head.

Happy the Man, who in the gloom of night,
Still sees thro' darkness day's approaching light;
Who hopes in sorrow, and while prosperous, fears,
Who looks for worlds beyond the vale of tears.

The' ~~even~~ afflictions cloud his present day,
The time is near when these shall pass away,
When brighter scenes shall meet his raptur'd sight,
And brighter glories in the world of light.

Now winter's gathering glooms o'erspread the
sky,

And all is bleak and cheerless to the eye :
How fares my friend on Hudson's rugged brow,
Where cold is keener, louder tempests blow ?
Say now what object does thy thought inspire,
While thou art shivering o'er thy blazing fire ?
Behold I send you from my Muse again,
A long, a daring, and didactic strain ;
Receive this volume from your early friend,
And lash with mercy where you can't commend ;
I come no suppliant at the critic's throne,
I ask for justice, and for this alone.

Before you read, methinks I hear you say,
" My friend is toiling in his usual way.

The Powers of Genius,—there my friend beware !
I fear your fate—like Phaëton you may fare ;
Who rashly seeking, that, which he should shun,
Thought he could drive the chariot of the sun,

But who, cast headlong from the dazzling height,
Was plung'd forever in the depths of Night.

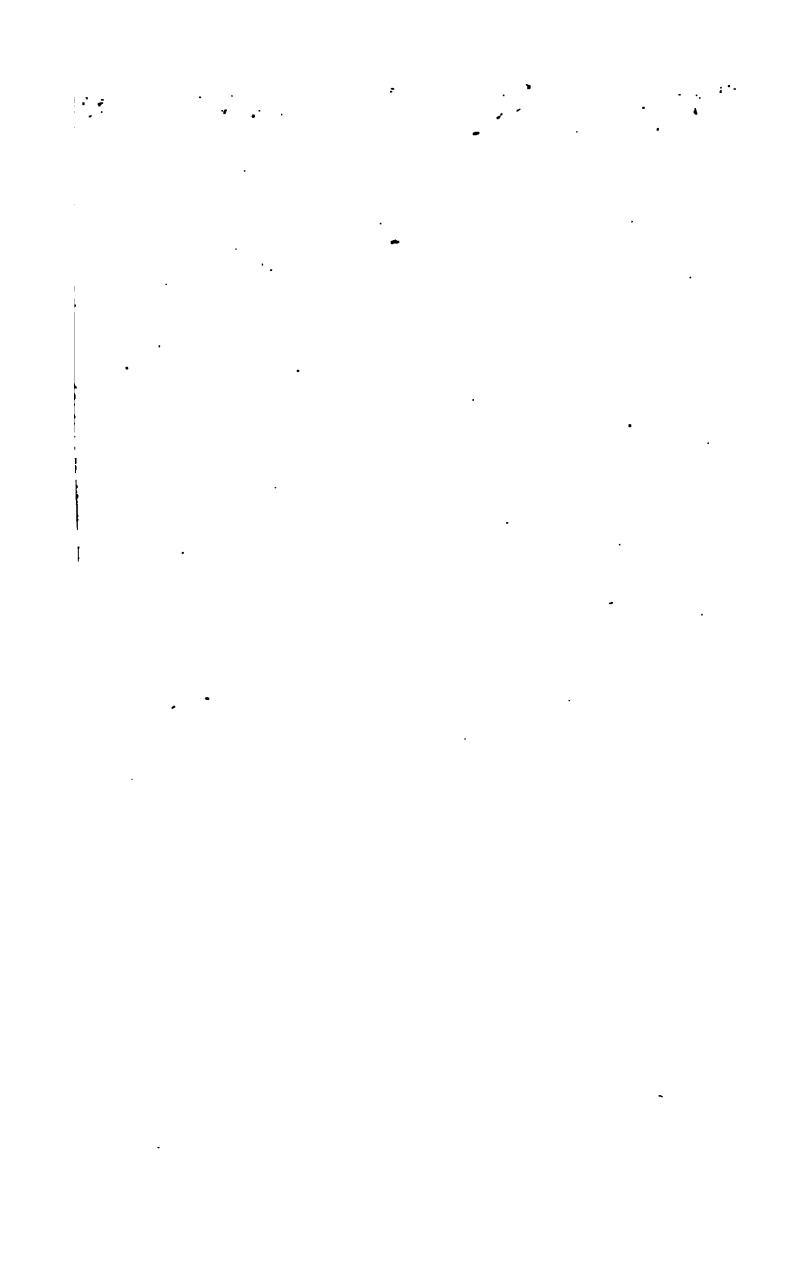
“The force you lead demands an high command,
The bow you bend demands a giant's hand;
The world censorious may *your powers* deride,
And these compare with *those* you would describe;
You should have chosen quite a different strain,
And sung of shepherds piping on the plain.”

Is this your language—O my friend forbear,
If thus *you* censure, what have I to fear?
How can I bid you modestly, proceed—
And censure only when you strictly read?

PHILADELPHIA, JAN. 24. 1801.

THE END.











1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

2. The second part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

